

592 one of the numerous wars between the native peoples of South-West
357 Africa when families were scattered and children left helpless on the
veld. They were then brought up in the family of their rescuer,
performing various menial services, and in general considering
themselves part of the family. Here and there such people still
offer their services voluntarily in return for their subsistence, or are
saved through pity from starvation and adopted.

They are to be regarded as servants or dependents rather than
as slaves. Often, no doubt, they are harshly treated, but they are
never bought or sold, and are free to marry as they will, although
they generally remain attached to the same family for long periods.
The men are entrusted with the care of the flocks, or accompany
their masters on the hunt and in the old days also to war, and in general
must be ready for any kind of service. The women attend to domestic
matters, clean the hut, fetch the wood and water, maintain the fire,
and so on, and also milk the cattle, when the mistress or daughter
of the house does not herself do so.

443 These family servants, /*gas*, are to be distinguished from the
445 /*gaisas*, or herdsmen, who hire themselves to a person for an arranged
payment, which they receive, in the form of young lambs, at the time
of the lambing season. The time of service is generally not specified,
and usually they remain with their employer for life, although they

[357] cannot be kept from departing when they wish. Their children are
free, but usually also remain as servants in the same family.

461 captives were so employed in olden times. Although such
 357 servants received no wages slavery was never known among
 the Nama. They were regarded as belonging to the family
 and quite often their masters were on very good terms with
 them.

262 It has already been mentioned that their diet consisted
 chiefly of milk and meat; but they never had a specific
 national food. They fed on whatever their environment
 offered them. Leaves of certain plants, bulbs, wild onions,
 berries of various shrubs, fish, birds, mice and lizards had
 to fill their dishes and to this very day such things are not
 scorned even by labourers, who get their daily ration of
 mealie-meal.

262 Nor is it desirable that the Nama should leave off eating
 146 the old field-food "veldkos" altogether, neither is it advis-
 able for the Government to prohibit them from looking for
 food in the fields. This veld-kos constitutes the Nama's
 vegetables, and wherever the Namas deemed themselves too
 dignified to look for it, or where they could not find it, their
 health always suffered. Everything should be done to en-
 courage the Nama to avail themselves fully of the veld-kos
 growing in their neighbourhood, as their wages are never
 sufficient to enable them to buy vegetables regularly. More-
 over, European vegetables are too strange and unpalatable
 to them.

244 7. Nowadays it is possible for only few to have their own
 797 gardens. During the time that the missionaries took pains
 to try to make the nomadic tribes fixed residents, they tried to
 introduce hitherto altogether unknown horticulture and here
 and there with success. To please the missionaries they
 planted pumpkins, mealies and other garden plants, now
 and again with good results. When, however, the exhortation
 of the missionaries ceased they neglected their gardens even
 where water conditions were favourable. Gardening requires
 daily and patient exertion as well as a disposition that can
 look ahead, and this does not appeal to the Nama when there
 are other ways of making a living.

224 8. The Nama is much more interested in hunting than in
 gardening. Their ancestors had applied themselves to it, and
 with bow and arrow, followed by well-trained dogs, they would
 chase game untiringly till they killed it. In addition to this

411 they knew the art of charging the points of their arrows with
 home-made poison which they got by condensing the milk
 [125] of a certain euphorbia. After the Nama had become
 acquainted with the use of fire-arms, the gun, as well as gun-
 powder and lead, became the most popular trading articles of
 the travelling traders. But fire-arms proving themselves
 very dangerous weapons in the hands of the Nama during
 their wars and rebellions of the last decade, few to-day are
 privileged to possess a gun. It is not everything that falls

262 to his gun on a hunting trip which is carried to the Nama

10: Grevenbroek F-5 (ca. 1694) 1933

FX13 Hottentot FX13

Cape Hottentot

AN ACCOUNT OF THE HOTTENTOTS

273

domsters they arrest and bring back home in hope of a reward. They make trusty bearers, porters, carriers, post-boys and couriers. They chop wood, mind the fire, work in the kitchen, prune vines, gather grapes, or work the wine press industriously. They clear wild ground, and when the stones have been picked out of it, break it up with dibble, hoe, or mattock. Without relaxation they plough, sow, and harrow. From field, vineyard or garden they clear out the weeds with their rakes, and at harvest time they court themselves indefatigably, their heads bound with ivy and cornucopia so that the green clustering leaves may mitigate the fierceness of the sun's burning rays. A troop of Bacchic revellers you might say, and indeed the resemblance is complete save that the followers of Bacchus brandished goblets in their hands and were drenched with wine, whereas our natives at the harvest have a sickle in one hand and the corn stalks in the other, and whether harvesting, threshing, or winnowing are drenched in sweat.

Their wives and daughters make reliable washerwomen and busy chaps. They wash plates and dishes, clean up dirt, gather sticks from the fields round-about, light the fire, cook well, and provide cheap labour for the Dutch.^(*)

It is perfectly plain that without the aid of these slaves, our farmers, stout fellows though they be, would be groaning bitterly over their toil in the fields. But, oh, the shame of it! as usual too much good fortune has bred sloth, and many are envied as if by the spoils of Salmaria, won without toil or sweat.

It will not bore you, I think, and it will be a propos, if I tell you that I have seen a Hottentot woman, who in return for a day's labour had been given some scraps in a pialler by a certain Dutchman. She began to cove with delight like a hen gathering her chickens, calling her people together and making a regular distribution of her booty among them, and hardly keeping a mouthful for herself. All alike delight in this communion of goods.^(*) Even a pipe of tobacco when kindled is passed round from mouth to mouth of the crowd that keeps running up, until the weed has vanished into smoke and ash. Let the Christians learn from the natives to vie with one another in well-doing.

For the irrigation of the soil there is no lack of rapid, wholesome springs, streams and rivers, the incredible cleanliness and sweetness of which has often so enamoured or increased my thirst that you would have declared me to be a soldier of Jericho at the last testing.^(*)

^(*) See above, p. 47.

^(*) Judges, I, 6, 4.